



Proclamation

Presented

In Recognition of Hawai'i Poet Laureate: Steven "Kealoha" Wong

WHEREAS, Steven Kealohapau'ole Hong-Ming Wong, hereinafter referred to by pen name "**Kealoha**," graduated with honors from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) with a degree in Nuclear Physics and a minor in writing, and has also received accolades as a director, playwright and actor; and

WHEREAS, Kealoha is an internationally acclaimed poet and storyteller who has performed throughout the world, from the White House to 'Iolani Palace, and hundreds of live venues throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, Kealoha, for over seven years has represented Hawai'i at the "National Poetry Slam"; 4 times making it onto the finals stage; in 2007 was ranked in the top ten of the Nation's best poets; and was honored as a "National Slam Legend" in 2010; and

WHEREAS, Kealoha was selected as a master artist for a National Endowment for the Arts program and gained recognition at the National Storytelling Network Conference, the Bay Area Storytelling Festival, and the Honolulu Storytelling Festival; and

WHEREAS, Kealoha was the first poet to perform at a Hawai'i Governor's Inauguration on December 6, 2010; and

WHEREAS, Kealoha is the founder of HawaiiSlam; two-time international champions Youth Speaks Hawai'i; and First Thursdays, the largest registered slam poetry competition in the world with an average attendance of more than 500; and

WHEREAS, Kealoha is dedicated to serving our community, such as serving on the Board of Directors for the Hawai'i People's Fund, a grassroots non-profit involved in grant-making; and

WHEREAS, Kealoha, by accepting the title of Hawai'i Poet Laureate, becomes the State's first official Poet Laureate, with the mission to promote the writing, reading, performance and appreciation of poetry among the people of these islands; and

WHEREAS, Kealoha, as Hawai'i Poet Laureate, will highlight poetry in all its myriad forms as enriching to the lives of all the people of Hawai'i and giving voice to our history and way of life; and

WHEREAS, Kealoha, at the Governor's request, will occasionally perform as Hawai'i Poet Laureate at official state events, and represent Hawai'i at similar ceremonial events held nationally and internationally;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, NEIL ABERCROMBIE, Governor, and I, BRIAN SCHATZ, Lieutenant Governor of the State of Hawai'i, do hereby proclaim Kealoha as

"HAWAI'I POET LAUREATE"

in Hawai'i and ask the people of the Aloha State to recognize Kealoha for his many contributions to culture and the arts in Hawai'i.

DONE at the State Capitol, in the Executive Chambers, Honolulu, State of Hawai'i, this third day of May, 2012.


NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor, State of Hawai'i


BRIAN SCHATZ
Lt. Governor, State of Hawai'i